

Message Text

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SUBJ: CARAMANLIS WINS VOTE OF CONFIDENCE FOLLOWING
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON GOVERNMENT POLICY

1. SUMMARY. WITH TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY IN PARLIAMENT
PM CARAMANLIS' VOTE OF CONFIDENCE (217 TO 78) DECEMBER 14
CAME AS NO SURPRISE. GOVERNMENT'S POLICY STATEMENT
ARTICULATED MID-WEEK BY PM PRODUCED SEVERAL DAYS OF POLITICAL
DEBATE DURING WHICH ESTABLISHED PARTY POSITIONS WERE
REITERATED. CARAMANLIS' RESPONSE TO PARTISAN PRODDINGS ON
STATUS OF FOREIGN BASES IN GREECE INDICATED GOG POSITION
REMAINS FUNDAMENTALLY UNCHANGED. END SUMMARY.

2. PREMIER CARAMANLIS RECEIVED FIRST VOTE OF CONFIDENCE
DECEMBER 14 WITH DEPUTIES VOTING ON STRICT PARTY LINES
217 IN FAVOR, 78 AGAINST AND FIVE ABSENTEES).
NEW DEMOCRACY LOST THREE VOTES FROM ITS 220 DEPUTIES,
TWO PRESUMABLY ILL PLUS S. THEOTOKIS WHO RESIGNED AS
DEPUTY (ATHENS 8879) WHILE CU/NF AND EDA EACH HAD ONE
ABSENTEE. HAVING CONCLUDED ROUTINE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE,
PARLIAMENT NOW TURNS TO NORMAL ROUTINE INCLUDING TAKING UP
KEY ISSUES OF PROVISIONAL PRESIDENT OF REPUBLIC (SEPTTEL)
AND DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION WHICH PM AMMOUNCED
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GOG WOULD INTRODUCE THIS WEEK. PM DECLARED DEBATE ON

NEW CONSTITUTION WHICH MAY EXTEND FOR THREE MONTHS WOULD PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL POLITICAL PARTIES TO EXPRESS VIEWPOINTS AND TO ASSESS OPPOSING POSITIONS IN PROPER FORUM. FOLLOWING PREMIER'S DELIVERY OF GOVERNMENT'S POLICY STATEMENT AND REPLY BY GEORGE MAVROS, CU/NF, AS OPPOSITION LEADER, PASOK CHAIRMAN ANDREAS PAPANDREOU AND KKE REPRESENTATIVE HARILAOS FLORAKIS TOOK FOLLOWING DAY AND MADE STANDARD "SOCIALIST"-"COMMUNIST" RESPONSES. (ATHENS 8880).

3. DEBATE RESUMED DECEMBER 14 WITH THE OPPOSITION (EDA/KKE - KYRKOS, CU/NF - A. CANELLOPOULOS AND MAVROS, PASOK - PAPANDREOU) RESTATING PREVIOUS POSITIONS WHILE ND (COORDINATION MINISTER PAPALIGOURAS AND PM CARAMANLIS) PLEDGED NEW GOVERNMENTAL POLICY IN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PLANNING ACCORDING TO EUROPEAN MODELS AND NOTED THAT NEW CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY FOR PRESIDENCY WOULD BE OUTCOME OF PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE. IN FINAL REMARKS MAVROS ADDRESSED AGAIN QUESTION OF FOREIGN MILITARY BASES IN GREECE. "THE GOVERNMENT HAS PROMISED A REVIEW OF BASES. WE HAVE ASKED THAT BASES BE PLACED UNDER NATIONAL CONTROL AND WE INSIST ON THIS VIEW. WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND HOW IT IS POSSIBLE FOR FOREIGN BASES TO EXIST ON GREEK SOIL SURROUNDED BY BARBED WIRE WHERE EVEN GREEK MINISTER OF DEFENSE IS NOT ALLOWED TO ENTER. GREECE IS NOT A PLOT OF LAND TO BE LEASED. IT IS A SOVEREIGN COUNTRY. FOREIGN BASES EXCLUSIVELY CONTROLLED BY FOREIGN POWER CANNOT EXIST ON GREEK SOIL. FOR THIS REASON WE INSIST THAT SUCH FOREIGN MILITARY BASES BE PLACED UNDER NATIONAL CONTROL." PM CARAMANLIS IN FINAL REMARKS BEFORE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE CLARIFIED GOG POSITION ON FOREIGN BASES. "THE LEADER OF CENTER UNION/NEW FORCES MR. GEORGE MAVROS ...STRESSED THE NEED FOR FOREIGN BASES TO BE PLACED UNDER NATIONAL CONTROL. I WISH TO INFORM THE PARLIAMENT THAT THESE BASES ARE UNDER NATIONAL CONTROL. ON STRENGTH OF AGREEMENTS THAT EXISTED, FOREIGNERS HAD CERTAIN PRIVILEGES. THE REVISION OF THESE AGREEMENTS AND CONDITIONS AIMS AT ELIMINATING THOSE PRIVILEGES AND FURTHERMORE AT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WITHDRAWING THOSE BASES WHICH ARE NOT CONNECTED WITH GREECE'S DEFENSE INTERESTS."

4. COMMENT: WHILE SOME ATHENS NEWSPAPERS EXAGGERATED FOREIGN BASE ISSUE AND IGNORED PERSPECTIVE OF POLITICAL ARENA IN WHICH IT SHOULD BE VIEWED, A PHENOMENON WE MAY SEE MORE OFTEN IN FUTURE, BASIC GOG ATTITUDE APPEARS UNCHANGED. LANGUAGE CARAMANLIS USED IN

REBUTTING MAVROS' STATEMENT ADDED NOTHING NEW. IN ANY
CASE MAVROS' SPEECH WAS IN MARKED CONTRAST TO DOCTRINAIRE
PASOK AND KKE CALLS FOR ABOLITION OF ALL FOREIGN
BASES AS WELL AS FULL GREEK WITHDRAWAL FROM NATO.
CARAMANLIS' TREATMENT OF ISSUE WAS SKILLFUL RESTATEMENT
OF ALREADY ANNOUNCED GOG POSITION AND SHOWED SAME, "OLD PRO"
DEXTERITY THAT HAS CHARACTERIZED HIS PERFORMANCE
AS PM THROUGHOUT RECENT MONTHS. KUBISCH

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